

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 46-52 and 54 are pending in the application, with claims 46-49 being the independent claims.

Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

II. The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a)

At pages 2-3 of the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 46, 49-51 and 54 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as allegedly being anticipated by European Patent EP 0 773 285 A2 to Bravo *et al.* In an Amendment and Reply under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111, filed on June 29, 2006, Applicants traversed this rejection and submitted a full and complete reply to the Examiner's rejection, including an unsigned copy of a Declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 by one of the inventors, Adriana Bravo, Ph.D. In their reply, Applicants noted that a signed copy of Dr. Bravo's Rule 131 Declaration would be submitted to the Office once it had been received by the undersigned (*see* Amendment & Reply filed June 29, 2006, at page 8, fn. 1). Therefore, further to the above-noted Amendment and Reply, Applicants submit herewith a signed copy of Dr. Bravo's Rule 131 Declaration, along with Dr. Bravo's *Curriculum Vitae*. As was noted in Applicants' reply filed on June 29, 2006, Dr. Bravo states in her Declaration that the invention presently claimed in the present application was reduced to practice by the above-

identified inventors prior to the publication date of the European Patent, May 14, 1997. Accordingly, the European Patent does not represent the description of the presently claimed invention in a printed publication before the invention thereof by Applicants.

Hence, for at least the reasons stated above, the European Patent is not available as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) against the present claims. Applicants therefore reiterate their request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 46, 49-51 and 54 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a).

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.



Brian J. Del Buono
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 42,473

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1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600